

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A laser processing machine comprising:
a beam guiding chamber adapted for flushing with a flushing gas, the beam guiding chamber comprising an inner chamber; and
a pressure relief valve coupled to the beam guiding chamber for releasing the flushing gas from the beam guiding chamber, the pressure relief valve sealing the beam chamber when closed, and being configured to release pressure from the inner chamber only when an internal pressure in the inner chamber reaches a predetermined level, the pressure relief valve comprising
a valve chamber in fluid communication with the inner chamber, and
a basic support defining a chamber,
a moveable valve disk,
a pin attached to the valve disk and movably located within the chamber of the basic support, and
a seal associated with the valve disk,
wherein the valve disk and the pin attached thereto are jointly lifted and the contact between the valve disk and the seal is thereby broken when the pressure relief valve is open, and wherein the valve disk and the pin jointly descend from their lifted position into a position in which, due to the weight of the valve disk and of the pin, the valve disk is resting on the seal thereby sealing ~~configured to seal~~ the valve chamber when the pressure relief valve is closed.
2. (Cancelled)

3. (Cancelled)
4. (Cancelled)
5. (Original) The laser processing machine of claim 1, wherein the beam guiding chamber is adapted for flushing with a flushing gas at an overpressure compared to an atmosphere surrounding the beam guiding chamber.
6. (Original) The laser processing machine of claim 5, wherein the pressure relief valve is adapted to be opened passively when the overpressure within the beam guiding chamber exceeds a critical overpressure.
7. (Currently Amended) A method of flushing a beam guiding chamber of a laser processing machine, the method comprising:
 - flushing the beam guiding chamber with a flushing gas; and
 - releasing a portion of the flushing gas from the beam guiding chamber through a pressure relief valve,
 - the pressure relief valve sealing the beam chamber when closed, and being configured to release pressure from the inner chamber only when an internal pressure in the inner chamber reaches a predetermined level, the pressure relief valve comprising
 - a valve chamber in fluid communication with an inner chamber of the beam guiding chamber, and
 - a basic support defining a chamber,
 - a moveable valve disk,
 - a pin attached to the valve disk and movably located within the chamber of the basic support, and
 - a seal associated with the valve disk,
 - wherein the valve disk and the pin attached thereto are jointly lifted and the contact between the valve disk and the seal is thereby broken when the pressure relief valve is open, and wherein the valve disk and the pin jointly descend from their lifted position into a position in which, due to the weight of the valve disk and of the pin, the

valve disk is resting on the seal thereby sealing econfigured to seal the valve chamber when the pressure relief valve is closed, and to define an annular gap when the pressure relief valve is open.

8. (Original) The method of claim 7, further comprising flushing the beam guiding chamber with a flushing gas having an overpressure compared to an atmosphere surrounding the beam guiding chamber.
9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8, wherein the flushing gas is passively released through the pressure relief valve value due to the overpressure of the gas acting on the valve to open the valve when the overpressure exceeds a predetermined overpressure.
10. (Currently Amended) The laser processing machine of claim 1 [[4]] wherein the pin is attached to the center of the valve disk, and the pin is configured to move axially to move the disk in a direction generally perpendicular to the plane of the disk.
11. (Currently Amended) The laser processing machine of claim 10 further comprising wherein the seal is an annular seal against which a peripheral edge of the disk seats when the pressure relief valve is closed.
12. (Previously Presented) The laser processing machine of claim 11 wherein the weight of the pin is selected so that the disk can only be displaced sufficiently to break contact between the annular seal and peripheral edge when the predetermined internal pressure is exceeded.
13. (Previously Presented) The laser processing machine of claim 11 wherein the pressure relief valve is configured so that the peripheral edge and annular seal define an annular gap when the pressure relief valve is open.
14. (Cancelled)

15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 7 [[14]] wherein the pin is attached to the center of the valve disk, and the pin is configured to move axially to move the disk in a direction generally perpendicular to the plane of the disk.
16. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 15 further comprising providing the pressure relief valve with an annular seal against which a peripheral edge of the disk seats when the pressure relief valve is closed.
17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16, further comprising selecting the weight of the pin so that the disk can only be displaced sufficiently to break contact between the annular seal and peripheral edge when the predetermined internal pressure is exceeded.